

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1634

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, PGOV, IV

SUBJ: STUDENT STRIKE: HOUPHOUET TAKES CHARGE

REF: ABIDJAN 0422

1. PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY RETURNED FROM LAGOS JANUARY 16. A JOINT MEETING OF THE POLITICAL BUREAU OF THE PDCI WITH THE CABINET HAS BEEN SUMMONED FOR TODAY, JANUARY 17, AND A MEETING OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR JANUARY 18. THE NATIONAL COUNCIL, WHICH MEETS ONLY RARELY AND IN TIMES OF EMERGENCY, INCLUDES PRACTICALLY EVERY POLITICAL INSTITUTION IN IVORY COAST, INCLUDING FOR THIS SESSION THE POLITICAL BUREAU, THE CABINET, PARLIAMENT, THE SUPREME COURT, THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE LABOR UNION (UGTCI), AND GROUPS REPRESENTING STUDENTS, PARENTS, WOMEN, YOUTH, TEACHERS AND OTHERS. HOUPHOUET WILL PRESIDE OVER BOTH MEETINGS.

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2. HOUPHOUET'S PRESS WAS FIRST PUBLIC REFERENCE TO STUDENT PROBLEMS. HIS IMPROMPTU REMARKS WERE A MASTERFUL AND CANNY MIXTURE OF SOOTHING WORDS ABOUT STUDENTS IN GENERAL, REGRET FOR THE COURSE TAKEN BY A DISORDERLY FEW, AND A CALL FOR DISCIPLINE AND HARD WORK IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST. SOME EXCERPTS: "WHAT HAS HAPPENED HAS

BEEN DISTORTED BY THOSE WHO WISH CHAOS IN IVORY COAST TO JUSTIFY THEIR OWN INCAPACITY TO GOVERN THEIR OWN COUNTRIES WISELY" "THERE IS NO CONFLICT BETWEEN OUR STUDENTS AND OUR HOPES, OUR LEADERSHIP, OR OUR GOVERNMENT" "SOME SAY WE SPOIL OUR CHILDREN, WE WILL CONTINUE TO SPOIL THEM SINCE WE EXPECT MUCH OF THEM" "OUR STUDENTS RECEIVE THE HIGHEST SCHOLARSHIPS IN AFRICA, SUBSIDIZED MEALS AND LODGING WITH 27,500 CFA POCKET MONEY" ... "THE BASIC PROBLEM IS A BANAL QUESTION OF DISCIPLINE IN THE UNIVERSITY."

3. HOUPHOUET WENT ON TO SAY THAT PROPER CHANNELS OF APPEAL WERE OPEN TO SUSPENDED STUDENTS AND THEIR SUPPORTERS, INCLUDING IN THE LAST RESORT HIMSELF. "I HAVE A GREAT WEAKNESS, NOBODY APPEALS TO MY CLEMENCY IN VAIN, BUT THESE STUDENTS HAVE NOT FOLLOWED THE IVORIAN ROAD OF DIALOGUE." ... "BECAUSE OF TWENTY DISORDERLY PERSONS, FEW IN COMPARISON WITH 6,000 STUDENTS, INNOCENT PEOPLE ARE TODAY AT AKOUEDO (A MILITARY CAMP NEAR ABIDJAN)" ... "DO NOT FORCE US TO CHOOSE BETWEEN INJUSTICE AND DISORDER, WE CAN CORRECT INJUSTICE BUT DISORDER CAN LEAD TO NATIONAL DISASTER." HOUPHOUET CONCLUDED WITH A HOMILY ON THE NEED FOR DISCIPLINE AND SACRIFICE FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT. "I HOPE THAT THE YOUNG PEOPLE WILL NOT FORCE US TO TAKE FURTHER PAINFUL MEASURES." ... "LEARNING IS INDISPENSABLE, AND EVEN RICH COUNTRIES DO NOT GIVE DEGREES FOR NOTHING." ... "EDUCATION IS THE BEST TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY TO HELP US BREAK THE YOKE OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT."

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4. ABIDJAN REMAINS ENTIRELY CALM. SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITY REMAIN CLOSED, HOWEVER, AND SENIOR GOVERNMENT TRAINING INSTITUTIONS, INCLUDING ECOLE NATIONAL D'ADMINISTRATION HAVE ALSO BEEN CLOSED. GOIC IS IN COMPLETE CONTROL OF SITUATION, AND HOUPHOUET'S OBVIOUS INTENTION TO DEAL WITH PROBLEM PERSONALLY AND DIRECTLY SUGGESTS OPTIMISM FOR ITS EARLY RESOLUTION.
STEARNS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 17-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
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Format: TEL
From: ABIDJAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770147/aaaabpck.tel
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